## Judicial Qualifications and Selection in the State of Texas

# **Supreme Court**

Number: 1 chief justice and 8 justices. Selection: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years Term: 6 years.

## **Court of Criminal Appeals**

Number: 1 presiding judge and 8 judges. Selection: Partisan, statewide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate. Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35

to 74; and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years.

Term: 6 years.

Civil Appeals

Criminal Appeals

#### **Courts of Appeals**

Number: Each court has 1 chief justice and from 2 to 12 additional justices, for a total of 80 justices statewide.

Selection: Partisan election within each court of appeals district. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 35 to 74; and a practicing lawyer, or lawyer and judge of court of record together, for at least 10 years.

Term: 6 years.

#### **District Courts**

Number: 1 judge per court.

Selection: Partisan, district-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by gubernatorial appointment with advice and consent of Senate.

Qualifications: Citizen of U.S. and of Texas; age 25 to 74; resident of the district for 2 years; and a practicing lawyer or judge, or both combined, for 4 years.

Term: 4 years.

## **County-Level Courts**

#### **Constitutional County Courts**

Number: 1 judge per court.

Selection: Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners

Qualifications: "Shall be well informed in the law of the State." (Law license not required.) Term: 4 years.

#### Statutory County Courts/Probate Courts

Number: 1 judge per court.

Selection: Partisan, county-wide election. Vacancies between elections filled by appointment by county commissioners

Qualifications: Age 25 or older; resident of county for at least 2 years; and licensed attorney who has practiced law or served as a judge for 4 years.

Term: 4 years.

#### **Justice Courts**

Number: 1 judge per court.

Selection: Partisan, precinct-wide election. Qualifications: No specific statutory or constitutional provisions apply.

Term: 4 years.

## **Municipal Courts**

Number: Generally, 1 court per incorporated municipality and 1 judge per court. Statutes allow some city governing bodies to establish more than 1 court and/or more than 1 judge

**Selection:** Elected or appointed by the governing body of the city as provided by city charter or ordinance.

Qualifications: Determined by the governing body of the city. Term: 2 or 4 years.